# Area Plan Summary

# Franklin-Emerald Area Plan

# Addendum to The Comprehensive Plan for Saint Paul

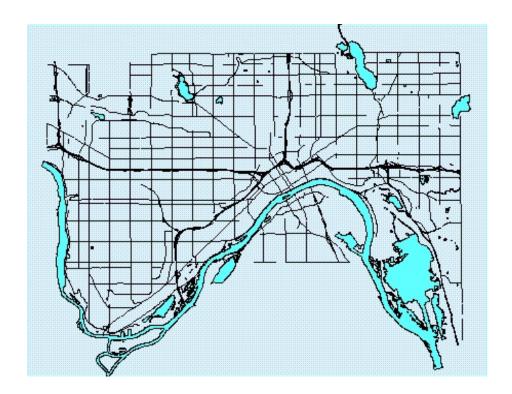
Recommended by the Planning Commission on May 11, 2001. Adopted by the City Council on June 20, 2001.

This summary appends to the Comprehensive Plan the recommendations of the **Franklin-Emerald Area Plan** for the revitalization of this mixed-use area that is south of University Avenue, between Highway 280 and the border with Minneapolis. Key recommendations include:

- Continue the mixed use nature of the area. New office, residential, or light industrial development is appropriate.
- Promote new development that is high quality with attractive building design, materials, and landscaping to create an improved gateway image into Saint Paul.
- Create pedestrian pathways and connections throughout the area, including an improved pedestrian link to the Prospect Park neighborhood along Franklin Avenue.
- Recreate the street grid south of Franklin Avenue if the Weyerhaeuser Lumber property becomes available for redevelopment.
- Maintain the Curfew Street residential area. Develop new housing to the west to create a link with the Prospect Park neighborhood.

#### Location

The Franklin-Emerald area is bounded by University Avenue, Highway 280, Interstate 94, and Emerald Street (which is the boundary with Minneapolis).



#### Vision

The Franklin-Emerald area currently contains a mix of uses, including office, industrial, and residential uses. The vision for the Franklin-Emerald area is to continue the mixed use character of the area, but improve this gateway into Saint Paul with high quality development that adds jobs, housing units, or services for the community and takes advantage of its location along the University Ave. transit corridor.

# **Specific Recommendations and Action Steps**

The plan divides the area into eight sub areas, labeled A through H. There are also overall design guidelines that are applicable for the entire area.

## Design Guidelines

Any redevelopment project proposed for the area should be designed to be consistent with the design guidelines in the plan. The guidelines emphasize the following:

- create a sense of entry into St. Paul from the west along University and Franklin Avenues
- create a gradual transition from the residential character of Prospect Park to the more commercial/industrial character moving east to Highway 280
- design new commercial buildings, especially along Franklin Ave. and Emerald Street, to reflect the design elements of Prospect Park
- plant street trees and install sidewalks throughout the area where they do not exist now
- place parking lots to the side and rear of buildings, and screen from the street
- construct parking ramps or underground parking when economically feasible
- orient new development to the street and the rest of the community
- use environmentally sustainable practices for new development, including on-site storm water retention, native plantings, and environmentally-sensitive design and construction

## Area A: Curfew to Emerald, North of Franklin

The plan encourages a continuation of the mixed use nature of this 13.75 acre area. New office, residential, or light industrial development is appropriate. Any proposed development should be high quality with attractive building design, materials, and landscaping to create an improved gateway image into Saint Paul. New development should also be pedestrian-friendly, and attempt to create pedestrian pathways and connections throughout the area, including an improved pedestrian link to the Prospect Park neighborhood along Franklin Avenue. Along the University Ave. frontage, office uses, and supportive non-automobile-oriented retail uses, are most appropriate. Design of buildings along Emerald Street should be responsive to the scale and design features of the Prospect Park neighborhood.

# Area B: West of Court International

Most of Area B is surface parking that serves the Court International and 2610 Office Buildings. This 2.35 acre area also includes two homes, one of which is a duplex with some office space. Surface or structured parking, and/or

Franklin-Emerald Study Area Sub-Areas

Area A B Area H Sub-Area G SHARON

Area E WABASH 194

additional office space is appropriate for this area. Continuation of the residential uses on the south end, because of their proximity to the Curfew St. residential area, would not be inconsistent with office or parking uses.

#### Area C: Weyerhaeuser

This 13 acre area is the location of the Weyerhaeuser Lumber Co. It separates the Curfew St. residential area (Area D) from the Prospect Park neighborhood. If the Weyerhaeuser property is sold, the plan encourages redevelopment of this area with residential, office, or light industrial uses. Preference should be given to developing residential uses north of vacated Myrtle Ave. to create a connection between the Prospect Park neighborhood and the Curfew St. residential area. South of vacated Myrtle, preference should be given to developing residential uses along the Emerald St. side and office or light industrial uses along a new Berry St. Townhouses, condominiums, and apartments will be encouraged. In accordance with the City's Housing Plan, 20% of any new housing units must be affordable to low and moderate income households. The street grid should be recreated in this area by developing new streets on the old Myrtle Ave. and Berry St. rights-of-way, with a connection on the south end of Berry St. over to Emerald St.

## Area D: Curfew Street Residential

Nearly all of the residential uses in the study area are included in this 4.9 acre area. Although Curfew St. has been zoned industrial for 25 years, the street is almost solidly residential. Currently, commercial truck traffic on Curfew creates unwanted noise and is a safety hazard for residents. The plan recommends that Curfew St. be maintained as a residential area. If Area C is redeveloped, alternative routes for commercial traffic from the south should be developed so that the access point onto the southern end of Curfew St. can be closed.

# Area E: Scaffold Services

This 7.2 acre area includes the Scaffold Services Co., which includes an industrial building and smaller office building with a variety of office tenants. The area has two accesses - to the south onto Wabash Ave. and to the north onto Curfew St. Most of the industrial truck traffic uses Curfew St., and the office traffic uses Wabash Ave. The tight corner at the Wabash access makes it difficult for the large scaffolding trucks of Scaffold Services to use that access. The plan encourages creating an alternate access point for commercial traffic from Area E to Wabash Ave. so that commercial traffic on Curfew St. can be eliminated. Possibilities include: widening the existing Scaffold Services driveway onto Wabash; opening an access onto the southern end of a new Berry St.; or developing a new driveway between Area E and the Case Equipment property. If redevelopment of this area is proposed, the plan supports office or light industrial uses.

## Area F: Hartzell Manufacturing

This 5.0 acre area adjacent to I-94 actually includes the Hartzell Mfg. building and another light industrial building that includes several business tenants, including Johnstone Supply, Minnesota Industrial Battery, and Reser's Foods. This area is about 15-20 feet below the level of Areas C and E. Freeway noise is high. The plan recommends light industrial or office uses in this area. Trucks from Area F are encouraged to always use Wabash Ave. for access, rather than Emerald St., which is residential along the Prospect Park side.

#### Area G: Case Equipment Corp.

This is a 10.5 acre area that includes a large 266,000 sq. ft. warehouse distribution building for Case Equipment Corp. It has frontage on both Franklin Ave. and Highway 280. If redevelopment for this site is proposed, the plan encourages office or light industrial use. Rehabilitation of the building for smaller light industrial users is also a possibility, if loading dock and parking issues can be resolved.

#### Area H: Court International

This 7.5 acre area includes the Court International office building and parking decks, with frontage on both University Ave. and Franklin Ave. The former International Harvester building was rehabilitated for office use in the 1980s, and is a landmark building for the area. One of the parking decks is located south of Franklin Ave., and it is sometimes hazardous for pedestrians to cross Franklin to get to the office building. The plan suggests techniques to make the pedestrian crossing of Franklin Ave. between the parking deck and Court International safer.

## **Priority Actions for City Participation**

To promote development that is consistent with the recommendations of this plan, the City of Saint Paul should:

- Encourage and support high quality redevelopment proposals for this area that include attractive building design, materials, and landscaping to create an improved gateway image into Saint Paul.
- Evaluate the need of proposed new development for City assistance, both financial and regulatory. Consider providing City assistance only if proposed new development results in significant public benefits to the area, such as an increase in jobs or housing units, additional greenspace, improved streetscapes, and higher quality buildings.
- Adopt a redevelopment plan for the Franklin-Emerald area to enable the City's Housing and Redevelopment Authority to undertake desired redevelopment activities.
- Working with the St. Anthony Park Community Council, encourage new development that is consistent with the area plan's design guidelines. Encourage design of new development that is pedestrian-friendly.
- Work to improve the quality of the public right-of-way in conjunction with new development by adding street trees, historic lantern lighting, and sidewalks where they do not currently exist.
- Require a traffic study for any proposed new development that will significantly increase the amount of traffic in the area.

### **Planning Commission Findings**

The Planning Commission finds that the *Franklin-Emerald Area Plan* is consistent with *The Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* and other adopted City policies.

### **Planning Process**

The St. Anthony Park Community Council created the Franklin-Emerald Task Force in June, 2000 to develop recommendations for potential future land use changes and redevelopment in the area. The fourteen member task force included representatives from study area businesses and residents, the St. Anthony Park Community Council, the Midway Chamber of Commerce, and the Prospect Park neighborhood in Minneapolis. Creation of the task force was spurred by the Community Council and City of St. Paul's recognition of the potential for redevelopment here given the area's location, current market conditions, and developer interest. The task force met seven times from June through December, 2000 to develop its recommendations. The planning consulting firm of LHB Engineers & Architects assisted the task force in its work by completing an analysis of existing conditions, a building condition survey, preliminary design guidelines, and potential redevelopment concepts.

Copies of the Franklin-Emerald Area Plan can be obtained by calling Donna Drummond at 651-266-6556.